

General Information Letter: Response to survey regarding taxation of municipal bond interest.

January 5, 2001

Dear:

This is in response to your letter dated December 1, 2000 in which you request answers to a survey on Illinois taxation of municipal bonds. Department of Revenue ("Department") regulations require that the Department issue only two types of letter rulings, Private Letter Rulings ("PLRs") and General Information Letters ("GILs"). PLRs are issued by the Department in response to specific taxpayer inquiries concerning the application of a tax statute or rule to a particular fact situation. A PLR is binding on the Department, but only as to the taxpayer who is the subject of the request for ruling and only to the extent the facts recited in the PLR are correct and complete. GILs do not constitute statements of agency policy that apply, interpret or prescribe the tax laws and are not binding on the Department.

Although you have not specifically requested either type of ruling, the nature of your question and the information provided require that we respond only with a GIL.

In your letter you stated:

We are currently reviewing your state's tax treatment of municipal bond income for the 2001 tax year. We collect this data annually for the benefit of xxxxxxxxxxxx clients who are residents of your state. While we realize your state's tax laws could change during the course of the year, we intend to publish available data by March 1, 2001. Therefore, we would appreciate a response by February 15 with the **best current available information** for the 2001 tax year. If 2001 information is not yet available, please provide information on currently effective tax law. Please inform us of the following:

- 1) How does your state account for federal and state tax deductibility on federal and state income tax returns? (circle one)
  - a) **One-way deductible** – The only deduction available to taxpayers is the deduction of state and local taxes paid from the federal income tax base.
  - b) **Cross-deductible** – Taxpayers deduct state and local taxes paid from federal tax base and also deduct federal taxes paid from state income tax base.
  - c) **Cross-deductible with add-back** – Same as cross-deductible, but also requires the taxpayer to add-back to his or her state income tax base all state and local taxes paid which were deducted from federal taxable income.
  - d) **Piggyback tax** – Taxpayers deduct state and local taxes from federal taxable income as in the one-way deductible method. However, the state income tax is a percentage of the federal tax liability.

- e) **Double-deductible** – Taxpayers deduct state taxes paid from federal taxable income and also from the state income tax base.
- f) **No state tax** – At this time this state does not levy a state income tax.
- g) **Other** – Please explain the method your state uses to calculate an effective state tax rate.

**Answer:** g) Illinois does not allow for the subtraction of federal taxes and requires the adding back of Illinois income taxes subtracted from federal adjusted gross income.

2) Does your state tax municipal bond income on out-of-state municipal bonds? Yes or No (circle one)

**Answer:** Yes, these sums are added back to adjusted gross income by §203(2)(A), which states:

(A) An amount equal to all amounts paid or accrued to the taxpayer as interest or dividends during the taxable year to the extent excluded from gross income in the computation of adjusted gross income, except stock dividends of qualified public utilities described in Section 305(e) of the Internal Revenue Code

3) Does your state tax municipal bond income on in-state municipal bonds? Yes or No (circle one)

If the income from only certain municipal bonds is exempt from state taxation, please include the section of your state tax code that lists those bonds which are state tax exempt.

**Answer:** The Illinois Income Tax Act ("ITA") allows for the subtraction from adjusted gross income of certain sources. Section 203(a)(N) states:

(N) An amount equal to all amounts included in such total which are exempt from taxation by this State either by reason of its statutes or Constitution or by reason of the Constitution, treaties or statutes of the United States; provided that, in the case of any statute of this State that exempts income derived from bonds or other obligations from the tax imposed under this Act, the amount exempted shall be the interest net of bond premium amortization;

Accordingly, if authorized by statute or the Constitution, bonds may be exempt from the Illinois income tax. Publication 101 (copy enclosed) lists the bonds currently excludable from income.

4) Are intangible taxes levied in your state on in-state municipal bonds? Yes or No (circle one)

If yes, is there an exempted amount?

Are intangible taxes levied in your state on out-of-state municipal bonds?

If Yes, is there an exempted amount?

If so, please send all the pertinent information relating to intangible taxes in your state.

**Answer:** Article IX, section 5(b) of the Illinois Constitution forbids ad valorem personal property taxes. Therefore, Illinois does not impose intangible taxes on either in-state or out-of-state municipal bonds.

5) Please complete or attach the current rate(s) of taxation and include the graduated income levels if applicable, for the 2001 tax year.

**Answer:** Article IX, section 3(a) of the Illinois Constitution forbids a graduated income tax.

Individuals	3%
C Corporations	4.8%

In addition, certain entities pay an additional Personal Property Tax Replacement Income Tax at the following rates:

C Corporations	2.5%
S Corporations	1.5%
Trusts	1.5%
Partnerships	1.5%

6) Were there any changes to your state's tax code in 2000 or are pending for 2001 that would affect holders of municipal bonds?

**Answer:** None at this time.

I hope that this has been helpful to you. If you have additional questions please feel free to contact me at the above address.

Very Truly Yours,

Charles Matoesian  
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